

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 OIC-02 OMB-01 /106 W

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R 191155Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 3256

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO SRI LANKA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : PFOR, PORG, BA

SUBJECT : ATTENDANCE AT COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED MEETING: BAHRAIN

REF : STATE 171414

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN IS UNENTHUSIASTICALLY PREPARING ITSELF TO FIELD A MAJOR DELEGATION TO THE NAC MEETINGS IN COLOMBO IN MID-AUGUST. ACCORDING TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA), A FIVE-MANIBAHRAINI DELEGATION, LED BY MAHMOOD BAHLOOL, DIRECTOR, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEPT. OF MFA, WILL ATTEND THE AUGUST 9 - 11 MEETING. THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF BAHRAIN, SHAIKH MOHAMMAD BIN MUBARAK AL KHALIFA, WILL ARRIVE IN COLOMBO ON AUGUST 11 OR 12 TO JOIN THE NAM FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING. THE AMIR OF BAHRAIN, HIS HIGHNESS SHAIKH ISA BIN SALMAN AL KHALIFA, WILL ARRIVE IN COLOMBO ON AUGUST 15 OR 16 TO ATTEND THE SUMMIT MEETING.

2. ACCORDING TO MFA, THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA HAS NOT BEEN INFORMED OF THE AMIR'S PLANS TO ATTEND THE SUMMIT AS HE IS WAITING TO SEE IF HIS AMIRI COLLEAGUES IN THE GULF REGION ARE ATTENDING. IF THEY DON'T, HE WON'T EITHER.

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3. TUCKED AS IT IS DEEP WITHIN THE ARAB BLOC FOLD, BAHRAIN

WILL TRY TO MAINTAIN ITS PRAGMATIC POSITION (ABSTENTION) ON MOST ISSUES EXCEPT THOSE DIRECTLY EFFECTING THE ARAB WORLD. MAHMOOD BAHLOOL IS A SOFT-SPOKEN, WE THINK NON-IDEOLIGICAL, OFFICIAL WHO IS INFORMAL AND WITH WHOM IT IS EASY TO COMMUNICATE. EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT COLOMBO OR DELHI OFFICERS MIGHT FIND HIM RESPONSIVE AND FORTHCOMING TO THE EXTENT HE IS INFORMED. IN NO SENSE IS BAHRAIN A MAKER/BREAKER OF ARAB POSITIONS, BUT WE HAVE FOUND IN THE PAST THAT BAHRAIN IS OFTEN WELL-INFORMED AND DISPOSED TO LETTING US KNOW ABOUT EMERGING POSITIONS.

4. AS FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTER, HE IS A QUICK-WITTED, INTELLIGENT MAN WHO HAS RECENTLY BEEN DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE ARAB LEAGUE'S ATTEMPTS AT MEDIATION IN LEBANON. WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT HE WILL PROBABLY BE TOO BUSY IN INTRA-ARAB COUNCILS TO FIND THE TIME TO TALK WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS.

5. THE AMIR TOLD AMBASSADOR JULY 17 FOR THE SECOND TIME THAT HE HOPES THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE "IS CANCELLED" SINCE HE PERSONALLY CONSIDERS IT A WASTE OF TIME AND HIS IDEA OF SUMMER FUN IS ORIENTED A LITTLE MORE TOWARD WEST END THAN COLOMBO.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PFOR  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 19 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** blochd0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976MANAMA01978  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** MANAMA  
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**Image Path:**  
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**Line Count:** 83  
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**Office:** ACTION IO  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 76 STATE 171414  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** blochd0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <19 OCT 2004 by blochd0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ATTENDANCE AT COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED MEETING: BAHRAIN  
**TAGS:** PORG, BA  
**To:** STATE SEC STATE USUN NEW YORK COLOMBO  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006